

# Wayne Allard

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Contact: Angela de Rocha  
(202) 224-5944  
Stephen Myers  
(202) 224-6207

## **SENATOR ALLARD RAISES ALAMOSA WATER QUALITY ISSUE AT SENATE HEARING URGES EPA ADMINISTRATOR TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on Thursday, U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) questioned Environmental Protection Agency Administrator (EPA) Stephen Johnson on the impact of new, unfunded federal arsenic regulations on the City of Alamosa and other Colorado communities.

“The City of Alamosa is facing a crisis,” Senator Allard said. “Despite the fact that Alamosa’s arsenic levels occur naturally in the water and have not been shown to have any adverse health effects at levels currently regulated, the EPA is forcing the city to make millions of dollars worth of upgrades to its water treatment system without any means of paying for it.”

“I served as a health officer for the City of Loveland, Colorado, and I understand how important it is to safeguard our health and the environment,” added Senator Allard. “But I also appreciate the challenge that communities like Alamosa face when they are forced to comply with unreasonable federal mandates.”

“Last year, I sent a letter to the EPA asking them to provide assistance to the City of Alamosa. After meeting with Alamosa city officials, it is clear that the EPA has not provided the help we were looking for,” said Senator Allard. “I asked Mr. Johnson to work with Alamosa to ease the burden of this unfunded mandate.”

The EPA recently lowered its acceptable contaminant levels for arsenic from 50 micrograms per liter to 10 micrograms per liter, and has set a deadline for compliance of January 2006. Installing a new arsenic treatment system in Alamosa is estimated to cost \$16.5 million.

“The problem of unfunded mandates isn’t just a problem for Alamosa; it’s a problem for communities throughout Colorado,” Senator Allard said. “It is the responsibility of the federal government and regulatory agencies to institute sensible rules that protect our health and environment without creating an unfair burden for states and local governments.”

Senator Allard is currently working with the City of Alamosa to obtain federal funding to offset the costs of upgrading its water treatment system. The funding is being sought through the State and Tribal Assistance Grant program at the EPA.

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